

IN THE CLAIMS:

Page 7, line 1: ~~CLAIMS~~ What is claimed is:

The following is a complete listing of claims in this application.

1. (original) An improved oral mucous membrane protector for orthodontic applications, consisting of a protective element or member characterized in that it is susceptible of being fixed to a bracket system (4) surrounding the molar tube (3) behind its flaps, at the height of the arch (5) projecting from the distal end (8) of the molar tube (3), covering or enveloping said end (8) of the arch (5) by means of the corresponding fixing means integrally joined to the body of the protector functionally acting as a receiver and guide of the end (8) of the arch (5), isolating it from the mucous membranes potentially susceptible of being damaged inside the patient's mouth.

2. (original) An improved oral mucous membrane protector for orthodontic applications according to claim 1, characterized in that the mentioned protective element or member consists of two functional parts, one part (2) for fixing the bracket system (4) on the molar tube (3) behind the flaps, where the end (8) of the arch (5) is, and a cover or cap (1) for covering the mentioned end (8) of the arch (5), and for protecting the mucous membranes inside the mouth, said fixing (2) of the cover or cap (1) consisting of an elastic ring (2) integral with the body thereof.

3. (currently amended) An improved oral mucous membrane protector for orthodontic applications according to ~~at least one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the mentioned cover or cap (1) for covering the mentioned end (8) of the arch (5) and for protecting the mucous membranes inside the mouth is preferably made of a synthetic, elastic,

impermeable and soft material, for example a silicone or solid gel.

4. (currently amended) An improved oral mucous membrane protector for orthodontic applications according to ~~at least one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the mentioned cover or cap (1) for covering the mentioned end (8) of the arch (5) and for protecting the mucous membranes inside the mouth is internally reinforced (9), at the bottom part, with an optional reinforcement preferably made of the same material.